Transit Development Plan 2023-2028

and 2022 Annual Report

Date of Public Hearing:

August 3, 2023

SoundTransit

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- Emailing stdiscriminationcomplaint@soundtransit.org;
- Mailing to Sound Transit, Attn: Customer Service, 401 S. Jackson St. Seattle, WA 98104-2826; or
- Visiting our offices located at 401 S. Jackson St. Seattle, WA 98104.

A complaint may be filed directly with the Federal Transit Administration Office of Civil Rights, Attention: Complaint Team, East Building, 5th Floor – TCR, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, D.C. 20590 or call 888-446-4511.

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INTRODUCTION

This Transit Development Plan (TDP) and Annual Report provides updated information to the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) on various elements of public transit service delivered by Sound Transit, also known as the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority. This report contains information for all of Sound Transit's current service modes including ST Express (commuter bus), Sounder (commuter rail), and T Line and Link (light rail). Planned capital expenses for Stride (a future bus rapid transit service) are also covered. The information in this report is current as of June 2023.

This document is submitted per the requirement of RCW 35.58.2795. As a public transit agency in the state of Washington, Sound Transit is required annually to prepare a six-year Transit Development Plan. WSDOT may use this document to prepare an annual report for the Washington state legislature summarizing the status of public transportation systems across the state.

1. PUBLIC HEARING AND DISTRIBUTION

1.1. Plan Adoption

The Transit Development Plan 2023-2028 and 2022 Annual Report is scheduled to be adopted by the Sound Transit Board of Directors on August 24, 2023.

1.2. Public Participation Process

Public comment period: July 17, 2023 - August 3, 2023

Comments can be mailed to: main@soundtransit.org
Sound Transit
Service Planning and Development
401 S. Jackson St.
Seattle, WA 98104

Public hearing: Sound Transit will hold a virtual public hearing on the Transit Development Plan on August 3, 2023. Written comments received prior to the public hearing and comments received during the public hearing will be recorded. A recording of the public hearing will be hosted online. A recap of the written comments will be added to Appendix A of this document.

Notice posted to website: Sound Transit posted a notice of the hearing on the Transit Development Plan to its website at www.soundtransit.org on July 17, 2023.

Notice published in local paper: The Daily Journal of Commerce published a notice of the hearing on the Transit Development Plan on July 17, 2023.

Requests for paper or digital copies: Sound Transit allowed the public to request a paper or digital copy of the Transit Development Plan on or after July 17, 2023 by emailing main@soundtransit.org or calling (888) 889-6368.

1.3. Plan Distribution

On September 1, 2023, Sound Transit will distribute the adopted Transportation Development Plan to:

- PTDPlans@wsdot.wa.gov
- The agency's assigned WSDOT Community Liaison
- The Transportation Improvement Board via:
    - Vaughn Nelson, Finance Manager at vaughnn@tib.wa.gov
    - Chris Workman, Engineering Manager at chrisw@tib.wa.gov
- All cities, counties, and regional transportation planning organizations within which Sound Transit operates

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2. SERVICE AREA, OPERATIONS AND FACILITIES

2.1. Introduction and Agency Background

In March 1992, the Washington state Legislature (through RCW 81.104.040) authorized King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties to create a single agency—the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority, now known as Sound Transit—to develop public transit alternatives to meet the region's travel needs. The Legislature charged Sound Transit with planning, building, and operating a high-capacity transportation system that would connect people to their communities and jobs throughout the urban areas of King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties.

On November 5, 1996, voters approved local funding for Sound Move, a regional high-capacity transit plan that included a 0.4 percent local sales and use tax, a 0.3 percent motor vehicle excise tax, and a rental car tax to finance construction and operation of the regional transit system. Sound Move included the ST Express bus network along with high-occupancy-vehicle (HOV) lane access improvements, Sounder commuter rail, and light rail.

On November 4, 2008, voters approved additional local funding as part of the Sound Transit 2 (ST2) plan. This transit plan included a new 15-year construction program of light rail, commuter rail and regional bus service by extending the Sound Move taxes, as well as increasing the local sales and use tax by an additional 0.5 percent to a total of 0.9 percent.

On November 8, 2016, voters approved additional local funding as part of the Sound Transit 3 (ST3) plan. This transit plan included a new 25-year construction program of light rail, commuter rail and regional bus service by extending the Sound Move and ST 2 taxes, increasing the local sales and use tax by an additional 0.5 percent to a total of 1.4 percent, increasing the motor vehicle excise tax by 0.8 percent to a total of 1.1 percent, and assessing a $0.25 property tax on every $1,000 of assessed home values.

Sound Transit has grown from a planning agency in the late 1990s to an agency that operates express bus (ST Express), commuter rail (Sounder), and light rail (T Line and Link). In 2019, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the agency carried 47.8 million passengers. In 2020, the agency continued to provide safe and reliable service to 15.9 million passengers. In 2021, ridership modestly increased to 17.8 million customers. In 2022, ridership recovered further, and the agency successfully carried 32.1 million passengers across all modes. ST Express carried 6.85M passengers, Sounder carried 1.27M passengers, T Line carried 268K passengers, and Link carried 23.7M passengers to support mobility throughout the Puget Sound region.

Sound Transit continues to build out light rail extensions, transit centers, and other transportation infrastructure, including bus rapid transit (to be named Stride BRT, a new line of service for the agency) along I-405 and SR 522/523. Sound Move, ST2, and ST3 provide the framework for Sound Transit service and capital projects. Although yearly refinements and updates are made as reflected in the Transit Development Plan and Annual Report, Sound Move, ST2, and ST3 continue to guide growth of the Sound Transit high-capacity transportation system.

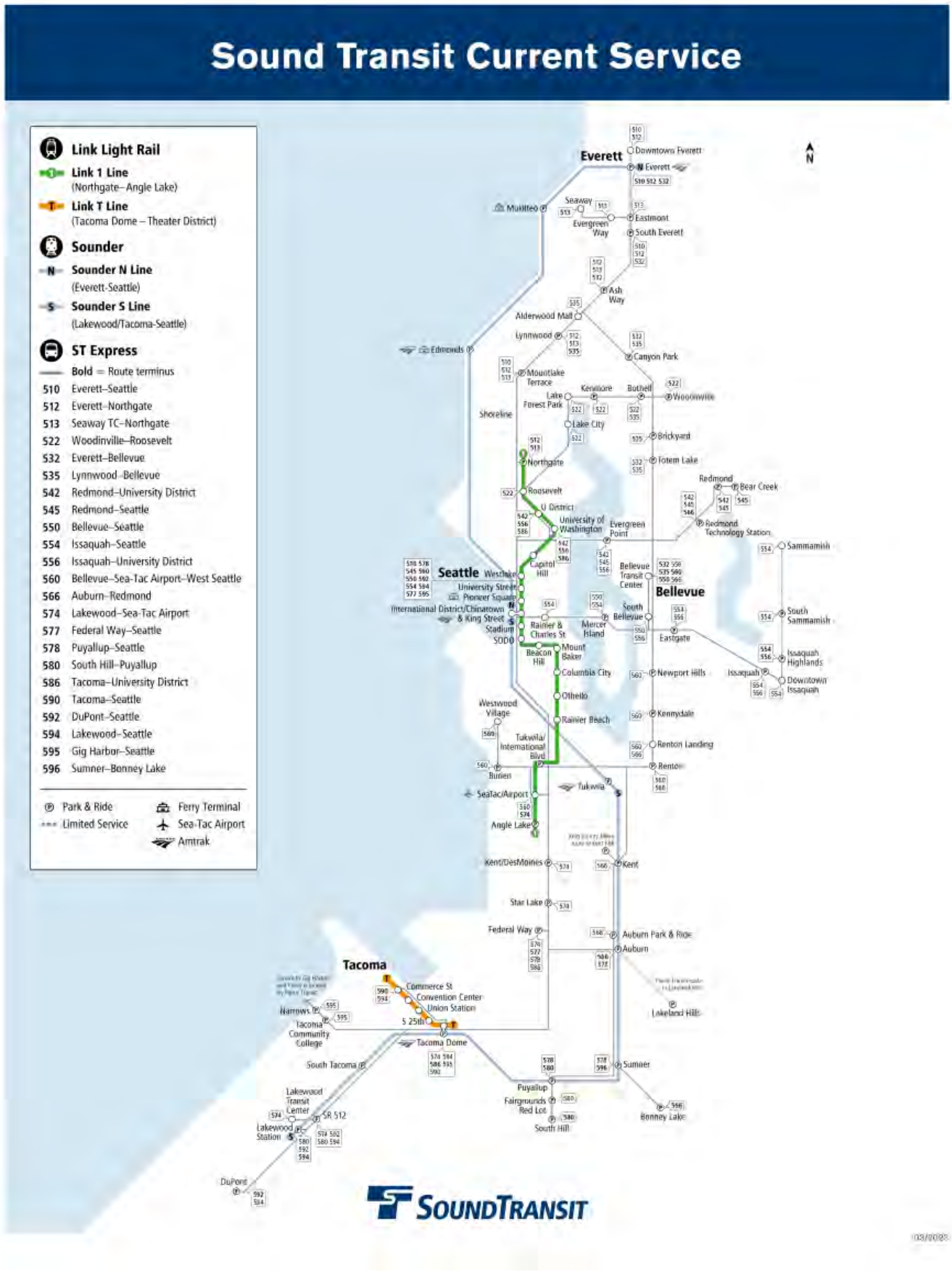
2.2. Service Area

Sound Transit's taxing and service area boundary lines follow the urban growth boundaries created by Snohomish, King, and Pierce counties in accordance with the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA). The Sound Transit service area boundary was adjusted in some places in consideration of voter precinct boundaries, city limit lines, and geography. For planning and budgeting purposes, the district was divided into five geographic subareas, each with unique system components.

Current and future service maps illustrating the **service area** are available on Sound Transit's website:

https://www.soundtransit.org/get-to-know-us/our-brand/maps

A copy of the map of the current service follows on page 7.



Planned future service is illustrated in the map on page 8.

An interactive map of the official Sound Transit District is also available online:

http://rtamaps2.soundtransit.org/st_determineaddress.html

Sound Transit also has a profile within the WSDOT Summary of Public Transportation which includes more details about the agency's **service area** and **intermodal connections**:

https://wsdot.wa.gov/engineering-standards/all-manuals-and-standards/manuals/washington-state-summary-public-transportation

The following subsections go into more detail about the **services**, **equipment**, and **facilities** related to the four transit modes that Sound Transit currently offers: express bus (ST Express), commuter rail (Sounder), and light rail (T Line and Link). Note that most Sound Transit services are actually operated by local partner transit agencies, with the exception of the T Line.

2.3. ST Express

Fleet: 319

Vehicles in Maximum Service: 212

2022 Annual Ridership: 6,852,694

Routes: 24

Adult Fare: $3.25

Sound Transit operates a regional express bus service which connects major destinations throughout the Puget Sound region. Service operates from 2:13 a.m. to 1:09 a.m. every day. ST Express routes range in service from weekday peak-direction-only service to frequent, all-day, bi-directional routes on both weekdays and weekends.

Sound Transit contracts with partner agencies—Community Transit, King County Metro, and Pierce Transit—to operate and maintain ST Express buses. ST Express service is operated out of Community Transit's Kasch Park Base in Everett, King County Metro's East Base in Bellevue, and Pierce Transit's operations facility in Lakewood. The ST Express fleet is fully equipped with Automatic Passenger Counters (APCs), which help monitor the mode's ridership.

As a result of ongoing staffing challenges, ST Express continues to operate at reduced service levels and several peak-hour routes have been suspended since 2021. As staffing levels allow for service restorations, the agency will prioritize adding service in South King County and Pierce County consistent with the Board-adopted 2022 Service Plan found here:

https://www.soundtransit.org/sites/default/files/documents/2022-service-plan-adopted-with-appendices.pdf

The following table lists routes in operation at the end of 2022 and their service characteristics:

Route Number	Express Route Description	Days Operated	Type of Service
510	Everett – Seattle	M-F	Peak Only
511	Ash Way – Northgate	M-F	Peak Only
512	Everett/Lynnwood – Northgate	M-F, Sa, Su	All-Day
513	Seaway Transit Center – Northgate	M-F	Peak Only
522	Woodinville – Roosevelt	M-F, Sa, Su	All-Day
532	Everett – Bellevue	M-F	Peak Only
535	Lynnwood – Bellevue	M-F, Sa	All-Day
542	Redmond – University District	M-F	All-Day
545	Redmond – Seattle	M-F, Sa, Su	All-Day
550	Bellevue – Seattle	M-F, Sa, Su	All-Day
554	Issaquah – Seattle	M-F, Sa, Su	All-Day
556	Issaquah – University District	M-F	Peak Only
560	West Seattle – Sea-Tac – Bellevue	M-F, Sa, Su	All-Day
566	Auburn & Kent – Overlake	M-F	All-Day
574	Lakewood – Sea-Tac Airport	M-F, Sa, Su	All-Day
577	Federal Way – Seattle	M-F, Sa, Su	Peak Only
578	Puyallup – Seattle	M-F, Sa, Su	All-Day
580	Puyallup – Lakewood	M-F	Sounder Connector
586	Tacoma – University District	M-F	Peak Only
590	Tacoma – Seattle	M-F	Peak Only
592	DuPont – Seattle	M-F	Peak Only

594	Lakewood/Tacoma – Seattle	M-F, Sa, Su	All-day
595	Gig Harbor – Seattle	M-F	Peak Only
596	Bonney Lake – Sumner	M-F	Sounder Connector

Fares were last changed on July 1, 2020, when Sound Transit implemented a flat adult fare of $3.25 on all ST Express bus routes. The fare structure eliminated the previous two-zone fare system in favor of one fare throughout the ST Express service area. The flat fare better corresponds with the fare structure of regional transit partners and simultaneously simplified the system.

ST Express buses serve regional transit facilities, including Sounder and Link Stations, park-and-ride lots, freeway stations, transit centers and ferry terminals.

2.4. Sounder (S and N Lines)

Fleet: 67 railcars, 14 locomotives

Vehicles in Maximum Service: 55 railcars, 9 locomotives

2022 Annual Ridership: 1,269,923

Track Length: 81.8 miles

Stations: 12

Adult Fare: $3.25 - $5.75

Sound Transit's Sounder commuter rail operates weekday service along two corridors that radiate from Seattle's King Street Station, north to Everett and south to Tacoma/Lakewood. Both services operate on Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway tracks.

The S Line serves stations at Lakewood, South Tacoma, Tacoma Dome Station, Puyallup, Sumner, Auburn, Kent, Tukwila, and King Street Station (Downtown Seattle). The N Line serves stations at Edmonds, Mukilteo, and Everett.

Through 2022, the S Line used five-car and seven-car trains while the N line usually operated using two-car and three-car trains, extending to five-car trains during special event service. Approximate travel times are about 60 minutes on the N line to Everett and about 55 minutes to Tacoma and 75 Minutes to Lakewood on the S line. The complete and current Sounder schedule can be found online:

https://www.soundtransit.org/sites/default/files/documents/schedule-sounder.pdf

Both Sounder lines operate additional seasonal trains for special events, such as sporting events in Seattle's Lumen Field or T-Mobile Park and the Washington State Fair in Puyallup.

Sound Transit owns 67 railcars (27 cab cars, 40 coach cars) manufactured by Bombardier and 14 locomotives manufactured by the ElectroMotive Division of General Motors and Motive Power Industries. Sound Transit contracts with BNSF to operate Sounder service and Amtrak for maintenance of the fleet. Maintenance activities are carried out at Amtrak's Holgate yard in Seattle. All Sounder railcars are equipped with APCs on every door.

Single-ride fares for adults range from $3.25 to $5.75 based on the distance traveled. Monthly pass prices range between $117 and $207. Senior/disabled fares are approximately 50% of the adult fare and youth and low-income fares are discounted approximately 25% from the adult fare.

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All Sounder commuter rail stations have bus transportation connections located directly at the station or within a short walking distance. Bus service schedules are often synchronized to the train schedule to allow passengers the opportunity to complete a seamless transit trip. In addition, Sounder shares Seattle's King Street Station with Amtrak, facilitating connections between the two services.

Under RailPlus, an agreement between Sound Transit and Amtrak, passengers with valid regional passes may ride Amtrak Cascades trains that operate between Seattle, Edmonds, and Everett. Likewise, Sounder will honor Amtrak tickets between these locations.

No service is provided on New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day. Reduced weekday schedules operate on the Day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and New Year's Eve when those days land on a weekday. The reduced weekday schedule operates eight round trips on the S Line and two round trips on the N Line.

2.5. T Line

Fleet: 3 (5 on order)

Vehicles in Maximum Service: 2

2022 Annual Ridership: 267,722

Track Length: 1.6 miles

Stations: 6

Fare: Free until Hilltop Tacoma Link extension opening in 2023

Tacoma Link, now called the T Line, opened in 2003 and is a 1.6-mile light rail line connecting the Tacoma Dome and the Theater District in Downtown Tacoma. There are four intermediate stations at S. 25th Street, Union Station, Convention Center, and Commerce Street. To operate the T Line, Sound Transit owns three electric-powered light rail vehicles manufactured by Inekon and Skoda Dopravni Technica of the Czech Republic. All vehicles are equipped with APCs.

Sound Transit operates and maintains the vehicles out of its central Operations & Maintenance Facility (OMF). A maximum of two cars are scheduled, with the third car available as a spare. The T Line alignment is approximately half double-track and half single-track, with a scheduled end-to-end running time of approximately 12 minutes each way.

Four of the six T Line light rail stations provide intermodal public transportation connections, including local and express bus service at zones along Commerce Street. The Tacoma Dome Station, at the south end of the line, provides connections to Sounder, ST Express, Pierce Transit local bus service, Intercity Transit bus service to Olympia/Thurston County and Greyhound intercity service. In addition, Tacoma's Amtrak station is located nearby.

The current T Line schedule can be found online:

https://www.soundtransit.org/sites/default/files/documents/schedule-tacoma-line.pdf

The T Line operate a "Sunday" schedule for the following holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Presidents' Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.

Paratransit services for the T Line are provided under contract by Pierce Transit.

No fares are collected on T Line because of Resolution R2016-10, which extended the fare-free designation of the T Line until the opening of the Hilltop Tacoma Link Extension in 2023.

2.6. Link (1 Line)

Fleet: 136 (99 OMFC, 37 OMFE)

Vehicles in Maximum Service: 76

2022 Annual Ridership 23,706,210

Track Length: 24.5 miles

Stations: 19

Adult Fare: $2.25 - $3.50

Link light rail service currently consists of one route (the 1 Line) running north-south between Northgate and Angle Lake. Trains arrive every eight minutes in the peak period, every 10 minutes in the midday period, and every 15 minutes at night.

The agency operates 62 low-floor light railcars from Kinkisharyo/Mitsui of Japan and 37 Siemens light railcars manufactured by Siemens Mobility in Sacramento, CA, while continuing to test and commission 58 additional Siemens LRVs. Each 95-foot vehicle can seat 74 passengers and hold up to 148 in a target maximum load. To date, 20 of the 62 Kinkisharyo vehicles (32% of the fleet) are equipped with APCs, while all the new Siemens vehicles are fully equipped with APCs.

The cars are currently paired in a mix of three-car and four-car trains, and all Link stations have been constructed to accommodate up to four-car trains. Day-to-day operations, maintenance, dispatching, as well as complementary paratransit service are provided by King County Metro under contract. Link vehicles are stored and maintained primarily at the central Link Operations & Maintenance Facility (OMF) in Seattle's SODO District on Airport Way South.

Passengers may transfer between Link and regional/local bus services on the street above the Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel (DSTT). Besides the DSTT, bus connections are available at all other Link stations, with five stations featuring extensive bus connections and other amenities:

- Mount Baker Station's construction also included the Mount Baker Transit Center, located east of the station across Rainier Avenue South and features bus layover facilities and three off-street bus bays.
- The Tukwila/International Blvd Station features a 600-stall park-and-ride lot and three bus bays located underneath the station, offering connections to King County Metro's RapidRide A and F Lines.
- SeaTac/Airport Station features two pedestrian bridges connecting both to the airport's parking garage and passenger terminal to the west and to International Blvd and four on-street bus bays to the east.
- University of Washington Station features a pedestrian overpass across Montlake Blvd to connect to bus routes on NE Pacific Street and on Stevens Way which is about 1,200 feet from the station.
- Northgate Station features four bus bays, a parking garage with 443 parking spaces, bike parking, as well as the John Lewis Memorial bridge that stretches about 1,900 feet over I-5. The bridge lands at North Seattle College on the west side and at 1st Ave NE and NE 100th St, serving Sound Transit's Link light rail station, on the east side.

The current Link schedule can be found online:

https://www.soundtransit.org/sites/default/files/documents/schedule-link-light-rail.pdf

Link operates a “Sunday” schedule on the following holidays: New Year’s Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day; it operates a “Saturday” schedule on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Presidents’ Day, and the Day after Thanksgiving.

Like Sounder, adult fares on Link are distance based and currently range from $2.25 for short-distance trips and increase in 25-cent increments up to $3.50. The price of a Link ticket starts with a base fare of $2.25, a per-mile charge of $0.05 is added to the base fare, then the sum is rounded to the nearest quarter to determine the final cost of the trip. Corresponding monthly pass prices are $81 to $117. Senior/disabled fares are $1.00 for all trips, with low-income fares set at $1.50 for all trips.

3. STATE & AGENCY GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES

The State's six transportation system policy goals (as stated in RCW 47.04.280) and corresponding Sound Transit actions in 2022 are as follows:

Policy Goal	Description	Sound Transit Action Strategies in 2022
Preservation	To maintain, preserve, and extend the life and utility of prior investments in transportation systems and services	Sound Transit continued to maintain its equipment, facilities and continued to operate public transit services.
Safety	To provide for and improve the safety and security of transportation customers and the transportation system	Sound Transit operated transit vehicles in a safe manner, maintained a group of safe and secure facilities and kept a regular schedule of light and heavy maintenance of buses and trains.
Stewardship	To continuously improve the quality, effectiveness, resilience, and efficiency of the transportation system	Sound Transit continuously adjusted service to right-size to available resources given staffing challenges. In the context of ongoing operator shortages, Sound Transit often had to reduce service to prioritize more reliable service delivery.
Mobility	To improve the predictable movement of goods and people throughout Washington state, including congestion relief and improved freight mobility	By carrying over 32.1 million riders in 2022, Sound Transit fostered greater ease of travel while mitigating traffic congestion for residents of the Puget Sound region.
Economic Vitality	To promote and develop transportation systems that stimulate, support, and enhance the movement of people and goods to ensure a prosperous economy	Sound Transit services connected multiple regional employment centers and promoted transit-oriented development at stations, enabling more people to access more jobs and thus boosting economic activity across the region.
Environment	To enhance Washington's quality of life through transportation investments that promote energy conservation, enhance healthy communities, and protect the environment	Sound Transit maintained ISO 14001 certification of our Environmental and Sustainability Management System.

The following are a few highlights of agency accomplishments from 2022 that illustrate how the agency is making progress on several of the policy goals:

- A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for extending light rail to West Seattle and Ballard was published in late January, prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and the State Environmental Policy Act.
- Crews began conducting light testing of East Link service, part of the future 2 Line, in late January and February.
- Two transit-oriented development sites had key transaction terms approved in February. These enabled new family-sized and affordable housing units to be developed adjacent to Angle Lake Station and the garage at SeaTac.
- $15.9 million in a new Federal Transit Administration grant for Stride bus rapid transit construction was secured in March to support construction of the future S1 Line between

Burien and Bellevue.

- On Earth Day, Sound Transit won a Climate Challenge Award from the Federal Transit Administration for the agency's sustainability efforts under the category of "Most Transformative." President Biden also recognized Sound Transit for operating the first light rail system in the country with 100% carbon-free energy.
- Three 124-ft. girders were set in place in April to connect the 7.8-mile Federal Way light rail extension to the existing 1 Line, enabling future expanded service.
- Fare policies were updated in May, including more equitable fare compliance reforms and approved funding for fare ambassadors. The Board also lowered ORCA LIFT fares for low-income riders from $1.50 to $1.00 for a six-month demonstration period and extended an existing program to provide fully subsidized transit passes to passengers with income less than 80% of the Federal poverty level through 2024.
- An updated ORCA card system was launched on May 16, including features such as a new website to enable real-time card loading and more payment options, a smartphone app, and business account website.
- The Fitch credit rating agency renewed Sound Transit's AA+ designation on June 14.
- Julie Timm was appointed as Sound Transit CEO after a nationwide search on June 23.
- In June, Sound Transit and the Washington State Housing Finance Commission announced a partnership to expedite affordable housing efforts as part of the agency's transit-oriented development program. Up to $200 million in affordable housing bond financing was made available for projects built on discounted Sound Transit surplus property.
- The Board identified the preferred light rail route and station locations for the West Seattle Link Extension in July.
- A portion of the Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes were opened in Bothell on July 20, the first major construction milestone as part of the SR 522 rapid bus route between Bothell and the future Shoreline South Link light rail station.
- The first in a series of "Future Ready" light rail state of good repair projects, replacing platform tiles at Columbia City Station, was completed ahead of schedule in August.
- Cedar Crossing, a new affordable housing development near Roosevelt Station, opened on September 14 as part of Sound Transit's Equitable Transit Oriented Development program.
- Free fares for youth aged 18 and younger went into effect on September 1, in partnership with other regional transit agencies, to create a seamless experience for riders. Over 100,000 free youth passes were distributed.
- The final T Line Hilltop Extension light rail vehicle arrived in Tacoma on November 10, completing the fleet necessary for future service to the Stadium business district and Hilltop neighborhood.

From 2023-2028, Sound Transit will focus on its strategic priorities and agency goals with corresponding measures of success outlined in the table below. The agency's vision, mission, and values serve as the basis for the five-year strategic priorities. Built into each strategic priority is an expectation that the actions and decisions made will consider Sound Transit's commitment to equity and fairness, environmental stewardship, partnerships, and the communities the agency serves.

The table on page 18 shows how Sound Transit's agency priorities align with state goals established in the Washington state Transportation Plan.

Strategic Priorities, Agency Goals, and Measures of Success	State Goal Areas					
	Preservation	*Safety*	*Stewardship*	*Mobility*	*Economic Vitality*	*Environment*
Strategic Priority 1: Deliver a safe, welcoming, and equitable passenger experience (**"***Great Ride***"**)						
Experience: Create a simple, seamless, and intuitive passenger journey • *Increase in foundational service measures of dependable, available, clean, and informed* • *Increase in overall passenger experience metric* • *International certification of asset management system*	X		X	X	X	
Safety: Improve physical and psychological safety for every passenger in stations and on all buses and trains • *International certification of safety management system* • *Increase in enhanced foundational safety measure that centers equity and psychological safety of passengers* • *Closeout of November 26, 2021 Link incident corrective actions by December 2024*		X	X			
New service: Plan, construct, activate and operate new Link light rail extensions and Stride bus rapid transit effectively and efficiently • *100 percent use of activation readiness tools* • *100 percent application of station experience design guidelines and station standard manual on ST3 projects* • *Improvement in enhanced operational metrics for all transit services*			X	X	X	X

In the future, Sound Transit's planned activities will continue to contribute to the state's transportation goals as follows:

- **Preservation:** Sound Transit is committed to making wise investments and prioritizing spending to deliver and maintain our equipment and facilities.
- **Safety:** Sound Transit is committed to high-quality, safe service to Sound Transit customers and riders. Sound Transit will continue to focus on the safety and quality of the passenger experience and will maintain safe, secure facilities, and keep a regular schedule of light and heavy maintenance of buses and trains.
- **Stewardship:** Sound Transit values our regional partnerships and the communities we serve. Sound Transit remains a reliable and solid transit system that serves the region.
- **Mobility:** Sound Transit is committed to building a world-class transit system that ensures mobility, equity, and safety. The agency will continue operating ST Express, Sounder, T Line and Link modes, and connect more people to more places to make life better and create equitable opportunities for all.
- **Economic Vitality:** Sound Transit is committed to supporting regional economic growth by providing reliable, accessible, and affordable transit service to passengers in King, Pierce, and Snohomish County.
- **Environment:** Sound Transit is built upon a commitment to environmental stewardship and compliance with environmental regulations. The agency will continue to improve the environment of the Central Puget Sound region by carrying hundreds of thousands of people each day on our trains and buses.

4. LOCAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND TARGETS

Sound Transit measures the performance of its system and regularly reports to the Board and shares information with the public. Sound Transit reports on the following categories in its System Performance Tracker available online:

https://www.soundtransit.org/ride-with-us/system-performance-tracker

The online dashboard reports on metrics aimed at delivering a safe, simple, seamless, and intuitive passenger journey by delivering on the following foundational service measures:

- **Accessible:** Sound Transit buses, trains and station facilities should be ADA-accessible and available to all.
- **Clean:** Passengers deserve vehicles and facilities that are in good working order and are free of trash, graffiti, and vandalism.
- **Dependable:** Passengers should expect consistent, reliable service that departs and arrives on time, allowing them to rely on Sound Transit to get where they are going.
- **Informed:** Passengers deserve to know what is happening, so Sound Transit tracks response time to complaints and how it is doing with service disruption notifications. Sound Transit continues to develop more measures for monitoring dissemination of information to passengers.
- **Safe:** Sound Transit is committed to providing a physically and psychologically safe experience for passengers, whether in stations, aboard buses and trains, or in any other Sound Transit facility.
- **Passenger feedback:** Sound Transit tracks trends and explores themes in passenger feedback provided to its customer care team.
- **Peer comparisons:** Sound Transit provides data that compares to other U.S. agencies with information from the National Transit Database (NTD).
- **Ridership:** Sound Transit is committed to delivering a great ride for all passengers and tracks ridership trends for ST Express buses, Sounder trains, and Link light rail.

More information can be found at Sound Transit's System Performance Tracker website.

4.1. Transit Asset Management

In addition to the metrics discussed above, Sound Transit measures its asset management program with the goal of keeping its equipment, vehicles, and facilities in a state of good repair.

4.1.1. Rolling Stock (Revenue Vehicles)

To ensure that its revenue vehicles are maintained in a state of good repair, Sound Transit projected the age of all Revenue Vehicles for the coming year and calculated the number of vehicles that would be above or below their Useful Life Benchmark (ULB). These targets were set by the agency using the FTA's suggested ULB for each modal fleet. Prior to NTD submission, staff reviewed the vehicle fleet and set achievable performance targets.

Vehicle Type	2023 Targets
Buses	22/303 (7.3%) that exceed ULB
Light rail vehicles	0/126 (0%) that exceed ULB
Commuter rail locomotives	0/14 (0%) that exceed ULB
Commuter rail passenger coaches	0/78 (0%) that exceed ULB
T Line vehicles	0/3 (0%) that exceed ULB

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4.1.2. Equipment (Non-Revenue Vehicles)

Sound Transit projected the age of all Non-Revenue Vehicles (NRV) for the coming year and calculated the number of vehicles that would be above or below their ULB. These targets were set by the agency using the FTA's suggested ULB for each modal fleet. A review of the NRV inventory was completed and each vehicle was categorized into its distinct sub-category where its age was compared to its ULB.

Vehicle Type	2023 Targets
Non-revenue service vehicles (including automobiles, steel-wheel vehicles, trucks, and other rubber-tired vehicles)	28/244 (11.5%) that exceed ULB

4.1.3. Facilities (Condition)

The agency reviewed all operating stations on a rolling triannual basis. Performance targets were set using condition assessment scores derived from the reviews. The agency sets targets based on the FTA Transit Economic Requirement (TERM) scale of 1-5.

Facility Type	2023 Targets
Support facilities (maintenance, administrative)	0/9 (0%) will have rating < 3.0
Passenger facilities (rail terminals, bus transfer stations)	4/54 (7.4%) will have rating < 3.0
Parking facilities (parking garages, park-and-ride lots)	0/15 (0%) will have rating < 3.0

4.1.4. Infrastructure (Performance Restrictions)

Agency staff provide regular reports of performance restrictions, defined as when the maximum speed of vehicles on a given track segment is below the segment's full service speed. For each reporting year, a target is set to compare the amount of track with performance restrictions to the total amount of track operated by the agency. Agency personnel advise whether any track will be under restrictions in the following year due to repair, and targets are adjusted to reflect planned future work and performance restrictions.

Infrastructure Type	2023 Targets
Sounder Commuter Rail	Less than 3.1/158.89 (2%) of track segments under a performance restriction
Tacoma Link (T Line)	Less than 0.05/2.7 (1.9%) of track segments under a performance restriction
Link	Less than 3.4/57.1 (6%) of track segments under a performance restriction

4.2. Safety

Sound Transit regularly reports on key safety measures within the annually published Agency Safety Plan. The 2023 Agency Safety Plan can be found online, with performance measures defined on page 15:

https://www.soundtransit.org/st_sharepoint/download/sites/PRDA/ActiveDocuments/Report%20-%202023%20Agency%20Safety%20Plan%20Revision%2001-26-23.pdf

5. PLAN CONSISTENCY

Sound Transit works closely with many local jurisdictions to plan, build, and operate a regional transit system. In fact, the Sound Transit District includes over 50 cities within the Pierce, King, and Snohomish counties. The agency's many projects and services are typically referred to as "high-capacity transit" (HCT) in the transportation elements of their local comprehensive plans.

Following guidelines from the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA), Sound Transit also ensures alignment and consistency with the goals and policies of the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) – the region's designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). In turn, PSRC reviews and approves local comprehensive plans, ensuring they are consistent with the regional transportation plans where Sound Transit plays a key role.

Other ways Sound Transit strives to align projects to the goals and objectives included in local comprehensive plans include:

- Coordinating with jurisdictions to check that their land use (zoning) is consistent with station area plans
- Aligning with local visions for future development and station typologies
- Fulfilling growth management objectives per PSRC guidelines
- Participating in the Model Code Partnership to align design standards and partner interests throughout a corridor such as the future Everett Link Extension

As the regional transit authority for Puget Sound, Sound Transit also regularly coordinates with other public transit agencies in the region on a wide variety of initiatives, including:

- Participating in cross-agency working groups (e.g., the executive-sponsored "Mobility Partnership" and relevant subcommittees) to investigate and share knowledge on common topics of interest such as ridership trends, workforce planning, fare coordination, transitions to zero emission fleets, etc.
- Continually working with service partners (i.e., Pierce Transit, King County Metro, and Community Transit) to coordinate routes and schedules as part of semi-annual Service Changes, in addition to partnering on actual service delivery
- Coordinating operations and service integration (including identifying resourcing needs) as major HCT corridor projects open, such as the Northgate and East Link extensions
- Conducting public engagement (e.g., public surveys, focus groups, etc.) together when reasonable
- Working together to serve passengers during service disruptions, through our respective Ambassador staff teams

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6. PLANNED CAPITAL EXPENSES

Planned capital expenses are aggregated at the project level within the agency's overall capital improvement program for conciseness, as referenced in the Multiyear Financial Plan section.

Below are a few selected highlights of planned elements, including notable additions in **rolling stock** and major new **facilities** that will be opening in the coming years alongside the primary system expansion projects (given known timelines as of June 2023).

6.1. Rolling Stock Expansion

- 2023: 11 new CEM bi-level passenger cars
- 2023: New and spare light rail vehicles for Lynnwood, Federal Way, and Redmond Link extensions
- 2025: Two articulated prototype buses for testing Stride BRT service
- 2025: Two double-decker prototype buses for testing Stride BRT service
- 2026: 13 articulated BRT vehicles
- 2026: 31 double-decker BRT vehicles

6.2. Facilities / Infrastructure

- 2023: New parking garage at Puyallup Station
- 2023: New parking garage at Lynnwood Station
- 2024: New parking garage at Sumner Station
- 2025: New parking garage at Auburn Station
- 2025: New parking garage at Kent Station
- 2026: NE 130th Street infill station
- 2026: Bus Base North and NE 85th Station facilities for Stride BRT
- 2027: I-405 South and SR-522/NE 14th Stride stations
- 2028: I-405 North Stride stations

7. PLANNED OPERATING CHANGES

Sound Transit's voter-approved regional transit expansion is one of the most ambitious in the country. As the agency continues building and opening new transit service every few years, riders will increasingly use a combination of Link light rail, Sounder commuter rail, Stride bus rapid transit, ST Express buses, and other local services to reach their destinations. Sound Transit service is more than a single project, route, or line. It is the connections between each mode that make an efficient, accessible transit network. As the agency continues opening new services, it will restructure existing services to continue strengthening the network and expand regional access.

The ST Express bus system was originally designed to strengthen regional mobility on an interim basis while Sound Transit planned and constructed fast and reliable HCT services. To connect more people to more places as the region grows, Sound Transit's enabling legislation and voter-approved plans require replacing interim ST Express bus service when new HCT projects (such as Link light rail extensions) are delivered. As new HCT projects are completed, Sound Transit will reevaluate ST Express routes in the surrounding area.

As Sound Transit continues to deliver new transit service to the region, original planned opening timelines have changed as additional information about project timelines and staffing availability have become available. The COVID-19 pandemic and its ongoing effects on the labor market and global supply chain, a regional concrete delivery strike, and quality issues have led to project delays. Sound Transit continues to monitor construction progress and operational capacity to determine when service will open and how much service is possible to provide within existing constraints. As a result, the planned operating changes reported here include several different service configurations and differ from previous years' reports.

The following section outlines the agency's planned service changes each year through 2028 given the known timelines as of June 2023. These proposed changes are not final and may change, be partially implemented, or deferred in response to construction progress and operating capacity.

2023

In 2023, revenue service will begin on the Hilltop Tacoma extension of the T Line.

Mode	Change Description	Type
T Line	Begin Hilltop Tacoma extension service	Expansion

2024

As early as summer/fall 2024, Link light rail will extend from Northgate into Snohomish County, serving four new stations: Shoreline South/148th, Shoreline North/185th, Mountlake Terrace, and Lynnwood City Center. An additional station will open at NE 130th Street in 2026.

Service to Lynnwood was originally planned to open as an extension of both the 1 Line (Lynnwood–Angle Lake) and the 2 Line (Lynnwood–Redmond). However due to construction delays on the I-90 bridge delaying full 2 Line service into 2025, service to Lynnwood will initially operate as an extension of the 1 Line only.

The routing of ST Express bus service on I-5 south of Lynnwood will be evaluated for connecting with the expanded light rail service. Lynnwood City Center and South Shoreline stations will become key transfer points for I-5 service north to Everett and SR 522 service eastward.

New 2 Line service between Redmond Technology and Lynnwood City Center stations was originally scheduled to open in mid-2023, with service extending to Downtown Redmond in 2024. Due to construction quality issues and necessary repair work on the I-90 portion of the project, Sound Transit delayed the timeline for both openings. However, the 6.3-mile segment between South Bellevue and Redmond Technology Stations could open for service earlier. The

Sound Transit Board will decide later in 2023 whether to open eight new Link light rail stations in Bellevue and Redmond in 2024.

Mode	Change Description	Type
Link Light Rail	1 Line service extended to Lynnwood	Expansion
ST Express Bus	Evaluate routing for Routes 510, 511, 512, 513	Supports expansion of 1 Line
Link Light Rail	Potential new 2 Line service between South Bellevue and Redmond Technology stations	Expansion

2025

The full Link 2 Line, which includes the East Link and Downtown Redmond Extensions, has a potential opening time frame of Spring 2025. Exact opening dates and service will be determined by construction progress and operational capacity. The 2 Line will provide direct service between Downtown Redmond and Lynnwood. Most ST Express bus service running along I-90 and SR 520 will be evaluated to coordinate and connect with expanded light rail service. South Bellevue and Bellevue Downtown stations will become key transfer points connecting bus riders to the regional Link system.

Mode	Change Description	Type
Link Light Rail	2 Line service expands to connect Downtown Redmond and Lynnwood City Center Station	Expansion
ST Express Bus	Evaluate routing for Routes 522, 542, 544, 545, 550, 554, 556	Supports expansion of 2 Line
ST Express Bus	When staffing and operational capacity allow, begin to restore service of ST Express routes in alignment with Board adopted priorities and ongoing evaluation of ridership trends	Restoration

2026

In 2026, the Link 1 Line is anticipated to extend south to Federal Way with three new stations. Most of the existing ST Express bus service on I-5 will be evaluated and coordinated with planned light rail service.

Mode	Change Description	Type
Link Light Rail	The segment of the 1 Line from Angle Lake to Federal Way has a potential opening time frame in 2026	Expansion
ST Express Bus	Evaluate routing for Routes 574, 577, 580, 592, 595	Supports expansion of 1 Line
ST Express Bus	When staffing and operational capacity allow, begin to restore service of ST Express routes in alignment with Board adopted priorities and ongoing evaluation of ridership trends	Restoration

2027

In 2027, new Stride bus rapid transit (BRT) service will begin operations along I-405 between Burien and Bellevue (S1 line) and along SR 522 / NE 145th between Bothell and Shoreline (S3 line). ST Express bus service will be evaluated to coordinate and connect with this HCT service.

Mode	Change Description	Type
Stride BRT	Begin S1 Stride BRT service on I-405 South between Burien and Bellevue	Expansion
Stride BRT	Begin S3 Stride BRT service on SR 522 / NE 145th between Bothell and Shoreline	Expansion
ST Express Bus	Evaluate routing for Routes 522, 560, 566, 567	Supports expansion of S1 & S3 Line

2028

In 2028, added Stride BRT service will begin operations along I-405 between Bellevue and Lynnwood (S2 line). ST Express bus service will be evaluated to coordinate and connect with new HCT service.

Mode	Description	Type
Stride BRT	Begin S2 Stride BRT service on I-405 North between Lynnwood and Bellevue	Expansion
ST Express Bus	Evaluate routes for Routes 532, 535	Supports expansion of S2 Line

8. MULTIYEAR FINANCIAL PLAN

8.1. Capital Improvement Program

A full list of capital projects and their **capital costs** (for the current budgeted year and next five years) can be found within *Appendix J* of the agency's publicly available 2023 Financial Plan & Adopted Budget:

https://www.soundtransit.org/sites/default/files/documents/2023-financial-plan-and-adopted-budget.pdf

- Link (light rail) projects: starting on page 97
- Tacoma Link (T Line) projects: starting on page 118
- Sounder (commuter rail) projects: starting on page 120
- ST Express (regional commuter bus) projects: starting on page 136
- Stride (bus rapid transit) projects: starting on page 144
- Other projects: starting on page 148
- Enhancement projects: starting on page 162
- State of Good Repair projects: starting on page 188
- Administrative projects: starting on page 201

Capital revenues from grants and other sources are detailed in the following table.

(In Thousands)

Annual Capital Purchase Obligations	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Federal Grants	$214,865	$305,898	$206,339	$195,596	$297,652	$300,000
Other Capital Grants	5,926	34,879	8,230	-	4,500	4,500
Debt Proceeds	-	1,330,000	1,808,317	-	-	-
Total	$220,791	$1,670,777	$2,022,886	$195,596	$302,152	$304,500

8.2. Operating Financial Plan and Cash Flow Analysis[1]

(In Thousands)

Annual Revenues	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Sales Tax	$1,742,068	$1,809,780	$1,884,074	$1,958,366	$2,039,301	$2,125,762
MVET	369,783	378,383	389,348	402,448	414,677	338,926
Rental Car Tax	3,961	4,080	4,202	4,328	4,458	4,592
Property Tax	165,355	169,470	173,514	177,674	181,956	186,395
Farebox Revenue	54,741	78,496	110,898	125,119	131,943	135,759
Federal Operating	60,576	87,244	81,892	78,003	78,615	78,689
Other Operating Revenue	9,993	8,597	33,002	31,787	43,465	22,862
Realized & Unrealized Interest Earned	58,917	47,962	32,098	37,555	24,604	22,293
Total	$2,465,392	$2,584,011	$2,709,028	$2,815,279	$2,919,019	$2,915,278

(In Thousands)

Annual Operating Expenses	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Annual Modal Expenses	$500,101	$607,715	$701,252	$784,323	$830,429	$854,640
Paratransit Expenses	3,185	5,028	6,966	7,992	8,592	8,915
Leases	17,371	11,622	7,307	7,563	7,767	7,729
Other Operating Expenses	174,091	201,110	209,498	217,131	234,741	297,644
Interest	-	-	-	-	-	-
Depreciation and Amortization	-	-	-	-	-	-
Donations to Other Governments	5,000	-	-	-	-	-
Total	$699,748	$825,475	$925,022	$1,017,010	$1,081,530	$1,168,927

(In Thousands)

Ending Balances, December 31	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Unrestricted Cash and Investments	$2,223,939	$1,404,770	$1,659,480	$999,560	$873,363	$386,045
O&M Reserve Fund	118,364	147,189	170,242	183,525	195,012	204,822
Capital Reserve Fund	342,336	345,759	349,217	352,709	356,236	359,798
Emergency Reserve Fund	53,941	60,036	66,191	72,408	78,687	85,029
Debt Service Fund[2]	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500
Contractually Required Reserve Fund	13,890	13,890	13,890	13,890	13,890	13,890
Affordable Housing Fund	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Total	$2,779,970	$1,999,143	$2,286,519	$1,649,592	$1,544,688	$1,077,083

[1] *Financial data sources: Forecast (2023-2027) is from a cash-based future model*
[2] *Forecast only includes prior bond reserve investment*

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9. PROJECTS OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

Given the role of Sound Transit as a regional transit authority, all projects detailed in the capital improvement program referenced in previous sections could be considered projects of regional significance. However, specific projects that are also programmed for funding within 2023-2028 in the regional transportation improvement program maintained by the Puget Sound Regional Council (the regional metropolitan planning organization) are identified in the list below. These projects are all in various stages of planning, project development, construction, etc. but have cashflow within 2023-2028.

- Federal Way Link Extension
- Auburn Station Improvements
- Downtown Redmond Link Extension
- SR 522/NE 145th St BRT
- NE 130th Street Infill Station
- West Seattle Link Extension
- Ballard Link Extension
- Boeing Access Rd Infill Station
- Hilltop Tacoma Extension
- Puyallup Station Improvements
- Sumner Station Improvements
- Everett Link Extension
- Lynnwood Link Extension
- Tacoma Dome Link Extension
- I-405 Bus Rapid Transit

Details for these regionally significant projects can be found in Appendix A (pages A-355 to A-372) of the Central Puget Sound Regional 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program:

https://www.psrc.org/sites/default/files/2023-04/rptAppendixA.pdf

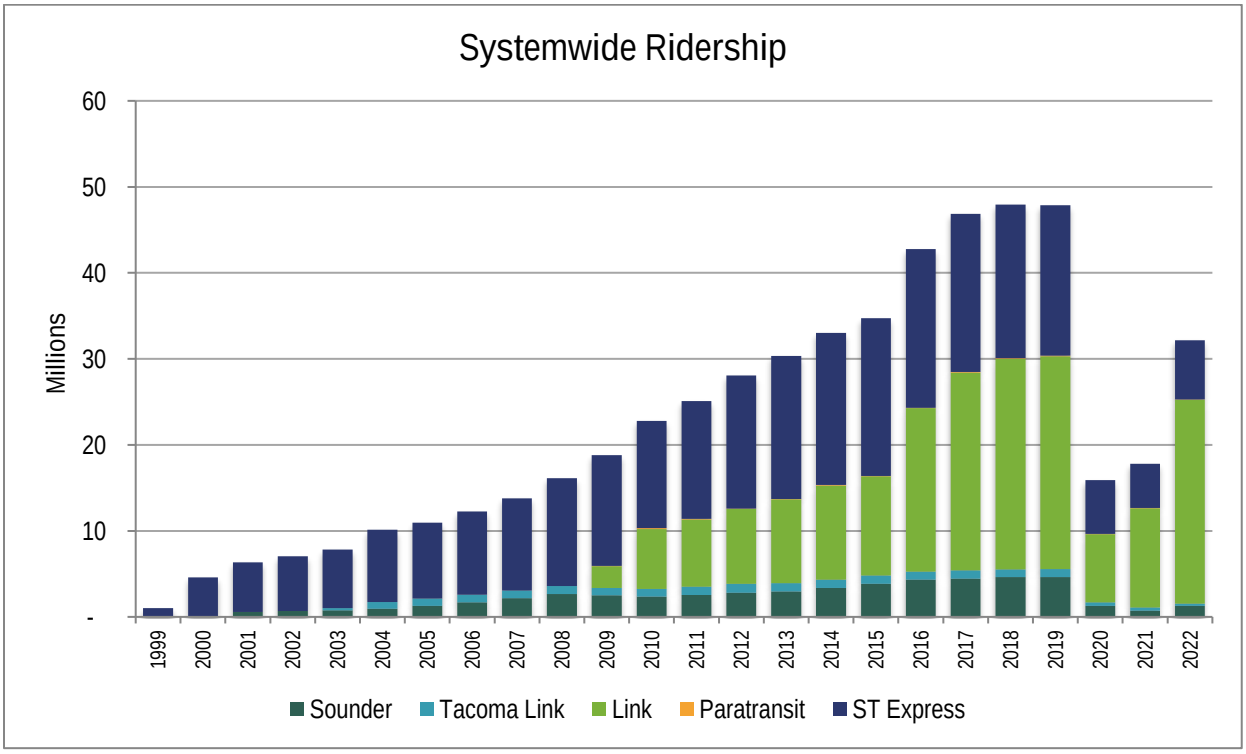
10. RIDERSHIP TRENDS

In 2022, Sound Transit served 32.1 million passengers across all modes. This was nearly double the ridership of 2021 (17.8 million passengers), which was only a modest increase over the COVID-19 pandemic low of 15.9 million passengers in 2020. This suggests that transit ridership in the Puget Sound region continues to recover, in response to both recent service expansions and use of transit for a variety of trip purposes.

Link light rail ridership grew the most in 2022, more than doubling from 2021. Sounder commuter-oriented service also saw nearly double the ridership in 2022. Ridership on ST Express buses continues to grow more slowly compared to other modes, potentially due to the ongoing operator shortages which have led to service reductions and delays in the planned restoration of service.

Since 1999, Sound Transit has served over 534 million passengers – providing enhanced regional mobility for Puget Sound residents.

TOTAL SOUND TRANSIT SYSTEMWIDE RIDERSHIP 1999-PRESENT



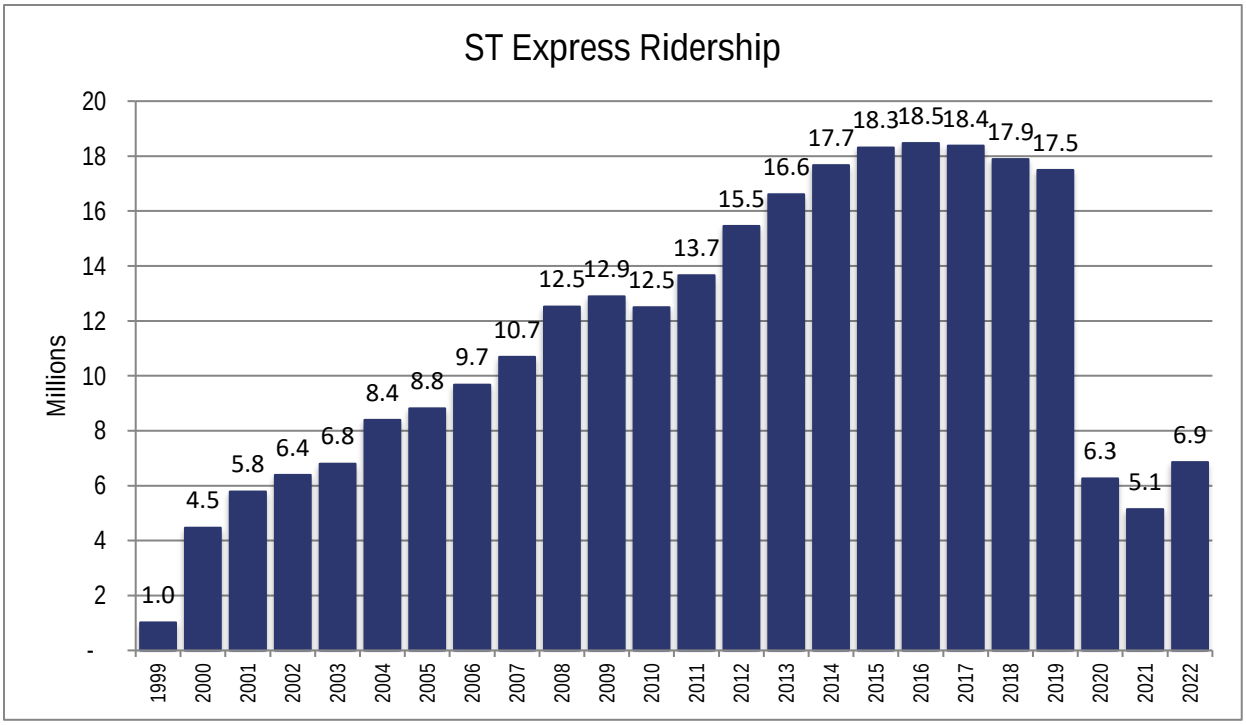
The following sections provide additional detail for each mode.

ST Express

Sound Transit's regional bus system, ST Express, served over **6.8 million** passengers in 2022. Among all modes, ST Express ridership declined the most from 2020, attributed to trip reductions caused by regional workforce constraints.

In 2022, ST Express carried **22,061** passengers on average each weekday. The figure on page 30 shows the trends for ridership on ST Express since 1999.

TOTAL ST EXPRESS RIDERSHIP 1999-PRESENT

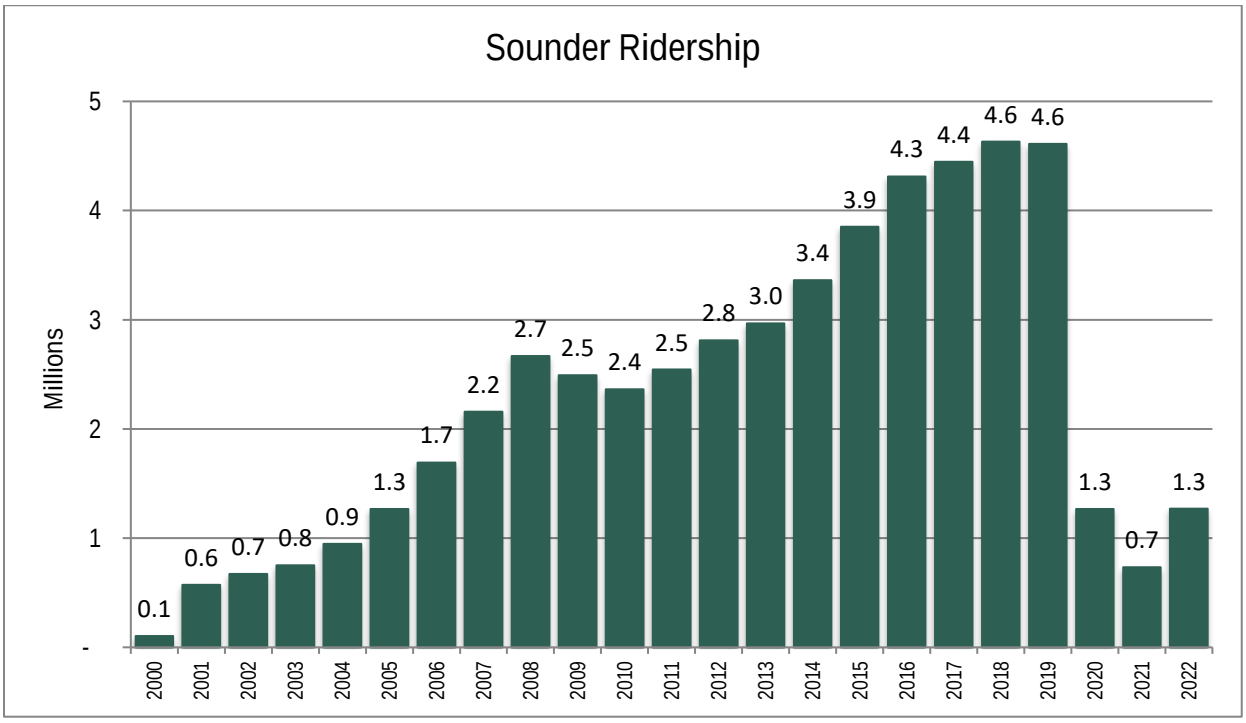


Sounder (S and N Lines)

Sounder commuter trains have carried over **52 million** passengers since service began in September of 2000. In 2022, Sounder carried **1,269,923** passengers, with an average of **5,019** boardings per weekday.

The following figure shows the trends for ridership on Sounder since 2000.

TOTAL SOUNDER COMMUTER RAIL RIDERSHIP 2000-PRESENT

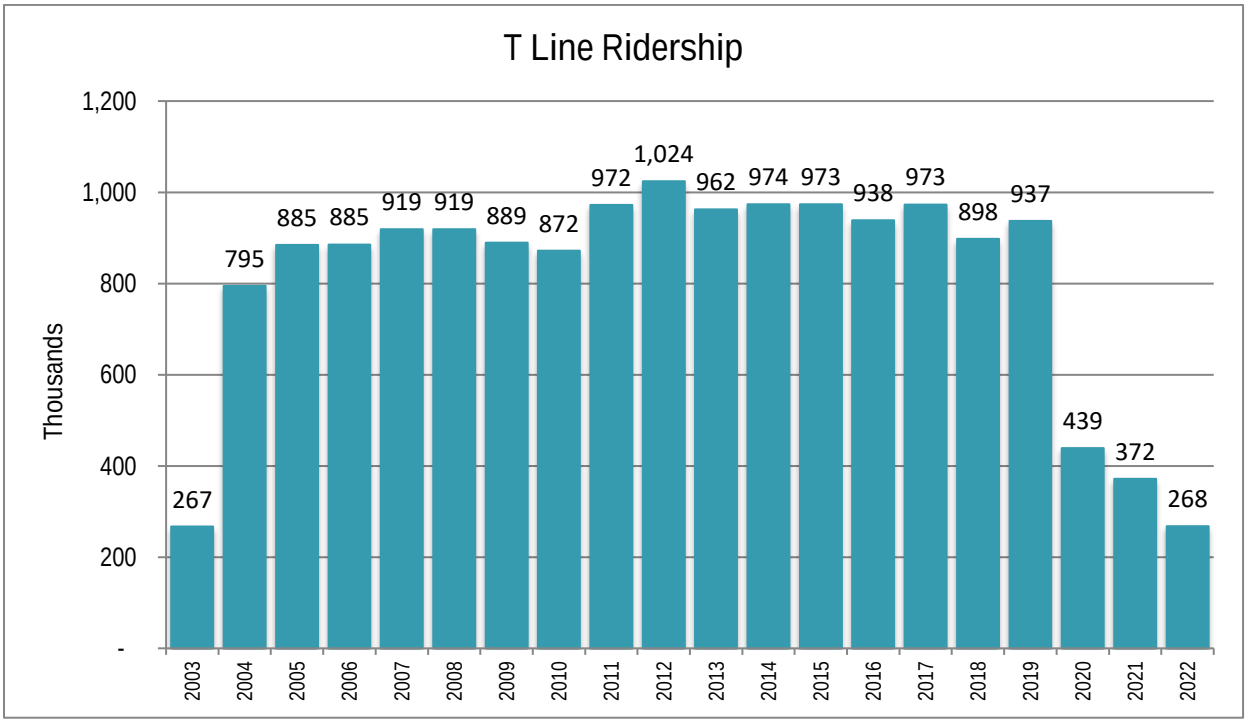


T Line

T Line (formerly Tacoma Link) has carried over **16 million** passengers since it began operations in 2003. T Line carried **267,722** passengers in 2022, with an average of **1,128** passengers each weekday.

The following figure shows ridership trends on T Line since 2003.

TOTAL T LINE RIDERSHIP 2003-PRESENT



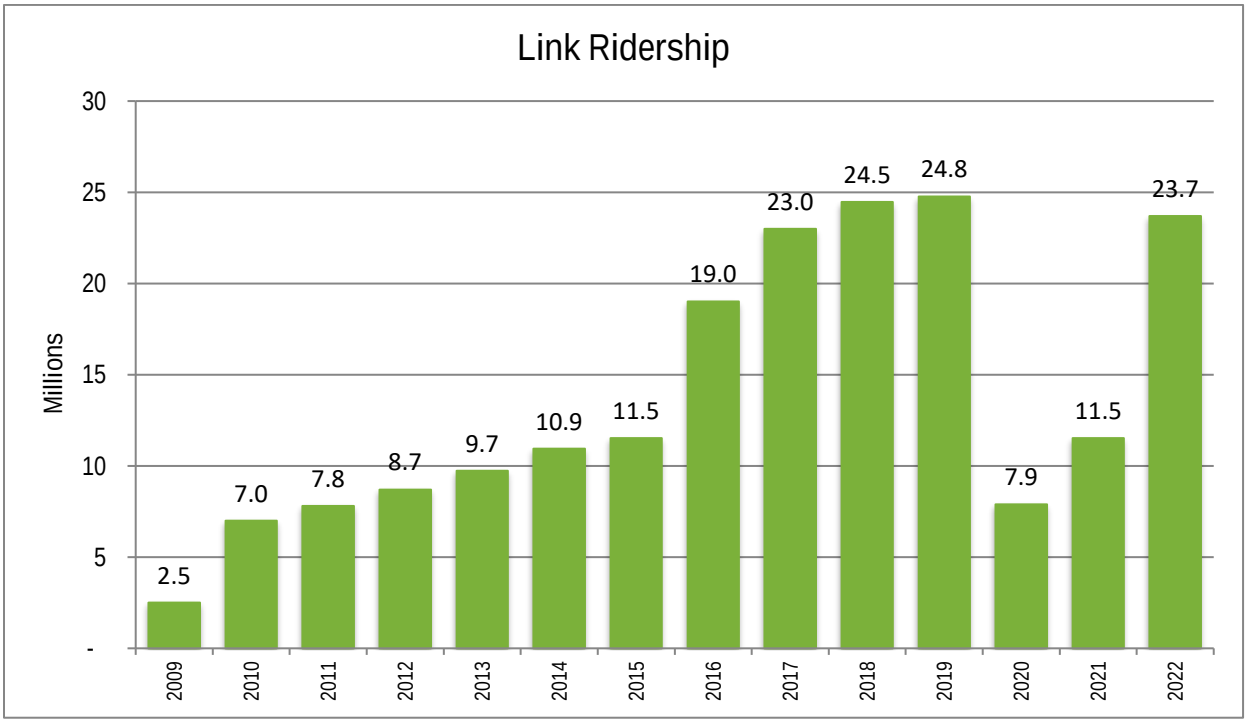
Link (1 Line)

Approximately **23.7 million** passengers rode the Link 1 Line in 2022, with over **192 million** boardings since the original line opened in 2009. Link carried **68,956** passengers on average each weekday in 2022.

The opening of the Northgate Link extension in 2021 and robust demand during special events have significantly contributed to Link's rapid post-pandemic ridership recovery.

The following figure shows ridership trends on Link since 2009.

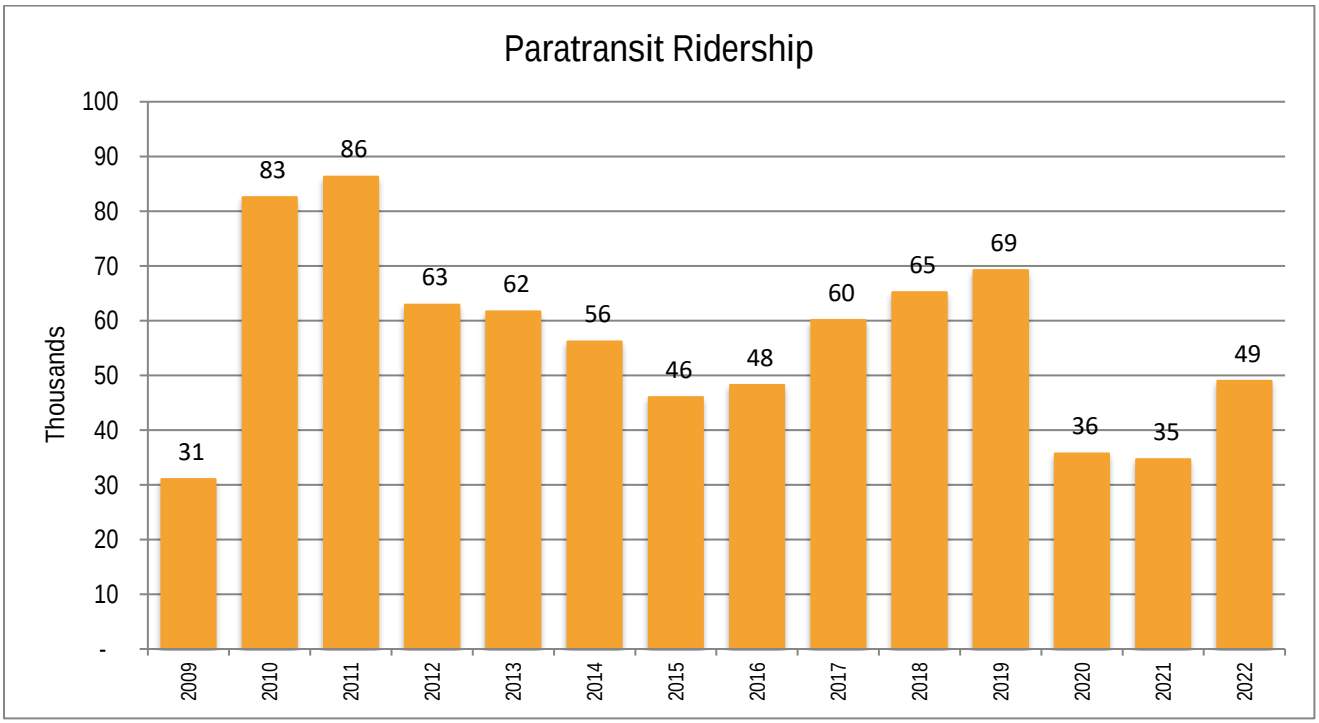
TOTAL LINK RIDERSHIP 2009-PRESENT



Paratransit

Approximately **49,006** passengers rode paratransit associated with Link service during 2022 and **788,921** passengers have used this service since Link opened in 2009. The following figure shows paratransit ridership allocated to Sound Transit since the beginning of Link service.

TOTAL PARATRANSIT RIDERSHIP 2003-2022



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11. AGENCY STRUCTURE

11.1. Board of Directors

In accordance with state law RCW 81.112.030, the Sound Transit Board is comprised of 18 members, including the Washington state Secretary of Transportation and 17 locally-elected officials nominated by each of the three counties' executive officials and confirmed by the respective county councils. The Sound Transit Board includes the three county executives, representatives from the largest city in each county and representatives from other cities and unincorporated areas of each county. At least one-half of all appointees from each county also serve on local transit agency boards. At the end of 2022, the Sound Transit Board of Directors included:

Dow Constantine, Chair	King County Executive
Kent Keel, Vice Chair	University Place Councilmember
Dave Somers, Vice Chair	Snohomish County Executive
Nancy Backus	City of Auburn Mayor
David Baker	City of Kenmore Councilmember
Claudia Balducci	King County Councilmember
Bruce Dammeier	Pierce County Executive
Cassie Franklin	City of Everett Mayor
Christine Frizzell	City of Lynnwood Mayor
Bruce Harrell	City of Seattle Mayor
Debora Juarez	City of Seattle Council President
Joe McDermott	King County Councilmember
Roger Millar	Washington state Secretary of Transportation
Ed Prince	Renton City Councilmember
Kim Roscoe	City of Fife Mayor
Dave Upthegrove	King County Council Chair
Peter von Reichbauer	King County Councilmember
Kristina Walker	City of Tacoma Deputy Mayor

APPENDIX A: PUBLIC COMMENTS SUMMARY

Comments Received

SOUNDTRANSIT

soundtransit.org/tdp